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Department of State

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EXCISE

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Control: 16195
Rec'd: November 28, 1957
12:35 p.m.

FROM: Tripoli

TO: Secretary of State

NO: 357, November 27, 7 p.m.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR
REVIEWED BY G.M.Ray DATE 5/6/82
EXCISED AS INDICATED

SENT DEPARTMENT 357; REPEATED INFORMATION LONDON 46, PARIS 43, BENGHAZI UNNUMBERED

PARIS FOR EUCOM

Brief, dignified but impressive dock-side ceremony held at nine o'clock this morning marking reception United States arms. Defense Minister Siddiq Muntasir headed sizeable Libyan delegation of civilian and military dignitaries including Deputy Governor Providence, Mayar Tripoli, Brig. Sanusei Leteiwish (Libyan), Deputy Chief Staff, and Tripolitanian press director Ben Zeitun. Major General Raghib (Iraqi), Chief of Staff Libyan army, was absent in Benghazi. Brig Shukri (also Iraqi), Raghibs liaison officer with Defense Ministry, also present but remained very much in background.

Brig Leteiwish met me as my car drove up and invited me accept honors and inspect company Libyan infantry. Muntasir and party then stepped forward join us, symbolic 105 howitzer was lowered overside ship to dock, Libyan and American national anthems played, and infantry company passed in review. Many pictures were taken, but no speeches were made, much to disappointment USIS taperecorder crew.

Muntasir then took me by arm and requested me ride with him in his car to Palace to sign King's book, as completion ceremony and in order that he might report to His Majesty that transaction had been successfully and happily completed.

We set off in Muntasir's canary yellow Cadillac, with Defense Minister driving himself. Other cars including Libyan dignitaries and MAAG members followed in column. We followed principal and most congested streets through Tripoli to Palace. Muntasir commented that he wanted everyone in Tripoli to see us riding together

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together in this unpretentious manner as symbol friendship and common ideals which bound us and our two countries together. He also stated that this was route trucks and guns would take from port to barracks in order that they might be seen by as many Libyans as possible. He returned to theme he has stressed with me numerous occasions recently that what he wanted was visible proof American aid to Libya, free from bombast and politics.

At Palace many group photographs and photographs of book-signing were taken. We were entertained over coffee and fruit juices.

Immediately following Palace ceremony, I returned to port with MAAG chief Sachs inspect rolling stock and Howitzers which were drawn up in parking area. Two minutes after my arrival, Mutasir and party also appeared on scene, likewise bent on inspecting materiel.

At this juncture, may I express to all who have worked on this deal in State and Defense and all who handled equipment in transit my deep appreciation for quality materiel furnished and for condition in which it was received. Libyans are completely overcome by its appearances and senior British training mission officer observing preparation vehicles for movement to barracks said "jolly good, Mr. Ambassador, we have never been able do this well by the Libyans". As I left port, Libyan soldiers under competent direction Senior MAAG noncoms were affectionately readying vehicles for movement.

If this sounds like somewhat glowing account proceeding, it is simply because it represents major step forward in Libyan-American relations and at least partial culmination dream I have held for three years.

At 1300 hours today, to astonishment of all, Defense Minister Muntasir presented himself in my office, stating purpose his visit was express deep gratitude Libya for American arms assistance and admiration for quality equipment.

[redacted]

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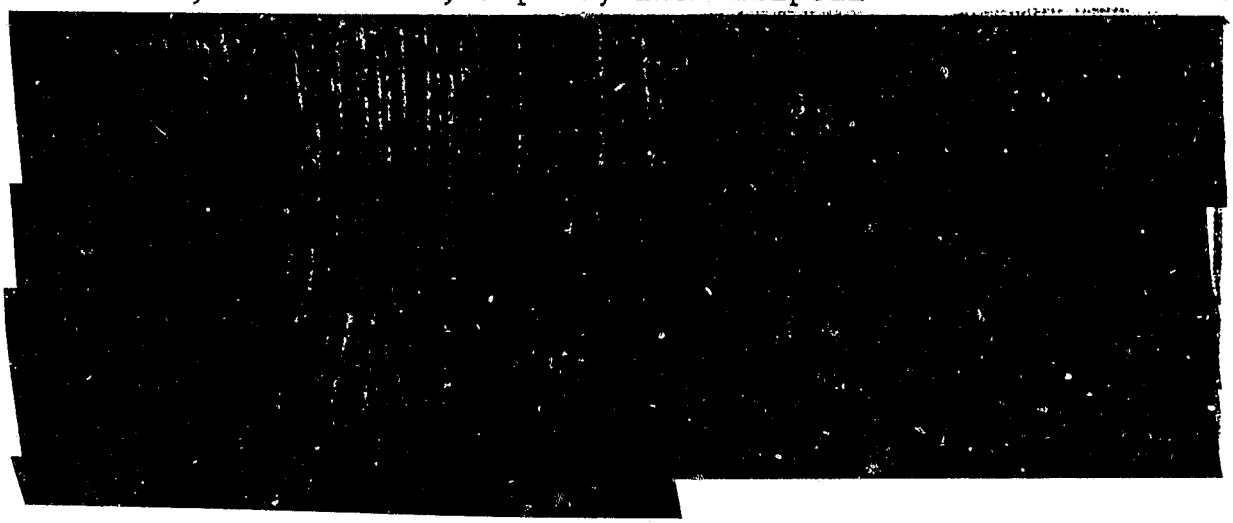

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